

Internet Conferencing



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Instant Messaging 101

Dateline: 04/20/98

What is Instant Messaging, what role does it play in Internet Conferencing?

Instant Messaging is not only one of the vital part of Internet Conferencing, but is also the seasonable craze in the browser wars at this present time. Instant messaging allows two people to communicate in "*real time*" over the internet, superceding the pace of email. Instant Messaging software allows you to track when another person logs on and logs off of the internet. Some software also gives you the convenience of sending files back and forth to one another.

What may be a surprise to you is that Instant Messaging is not a new concept. When Bulletin Board Systems were popular you could have real time conversations with the System's Operator. Unix talk programs and Internal Relay Chat programs have been around for an extensive time.

You may be wondering how you can receive the knowledge that someone you know is on the internet at the same time you are, depending upon the Instant Messaging software that you choose, it will require you to either enter in a screen name or email address, by this it is able to track if that person is online at the same time that you are. Instant Messaging primarily works similar to a client/server model. When the client connects to a central "server" that verifies your identity and registers you as being online then when other users register and connect, they will know that you are logged on because the server will know that you are online. Therefore rather than to run to your co-workers desk to ask them a

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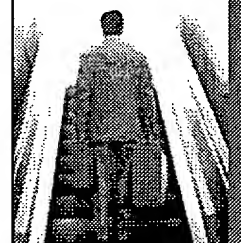
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than to run to your co-workers desk to ask them a question you can send them an Instant Message this saves on time, and increase productivity.

Software developers of Instant Messaging programs are running into one problem, which is programs use incompatible protocols and do not inter operate with one another. For example an [ICQ](#) user can not use his software to message someone using [AOL Instant Messenger](#) or [Infoseek's Instant Messaging](#), also known as PeopleLink. So the other person that you want to be able to contact must have the identical software that you have in order to correspond with you. It is my expectation that there will be standards established so all software packages can interact with one another and instant messaging can become as universal as email.

Then the question is privacy, what if your involved in completing a project and someone signs on and has the capability to tell that you are also online, well the fortunate thing is that you don't necessarily have to have your instant messaging software running at all times. Therefore if you need to complete work on a project or you just aren't in the frame of mind to "talk" you have that option.

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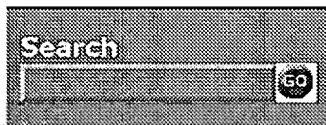
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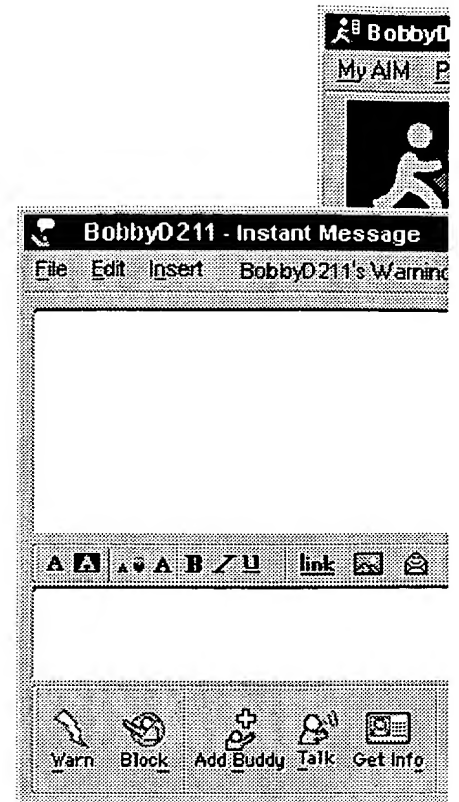
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By FTdynamo, special to searchEBusiness
18 Apr 2001, FTdynamo

Salesmen used to be told to "smile before you dial." Today the dictum runs: "Think before you send." The seductive ease of e-mail as a method of communication has lured many, sometimes quite senior executives, into dispatching messages, which, on reflection, should not have been sent at all.

Neal Patterson, the 51-year-old — and thus, you might think, fairly grown up — chief executive of the U.S. Cerner Corp. has achieved an unwanted and unexpected fame through a robust e-mail sent to his colleagues only a month ago. Patterson's vituperative memo was soon being shared on a public message board. Cerner — a health-care software development company — saw its own stock suffer a distinctly funny turn. It has now fallen to about \$30 from a \$44 high.

But at least Patterson had already made it to the top. For the rest of us, struggling lower down the corporate food chain, e-mail could offer a fast track to the boardroom — if only we learned how to use it properly. New research by David Owens, associate professor of management at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., has shown that our use of e-mail reveals as much about our career prospects as the most ingenious psychometric test. (School teachers and others of a sensitive nature should stop reading now.)

The fact is, the worst grammar and spelling in corporate e-mails is found in the missives sent by the top executives. Those of us who carefully spell-check and refine our e-mails, or who produce long, thoughtfully worded messages and arguments, just don't get it. We are mediocre, middle management fodder at best. Busy, successful people don't have time for quaint niceties such as spelling words out in full, using capital letters or punctuation or even bothering to reply at all to messages that seem somehow beneath them. E-mail silence is the modern equivalent of the dreaded words "return to sender" written on the envelope by the lover who has rejected you.

New technologies demand new approaches. The telephone forced us to reconsider how we conversed with our neighbors and colleagues. The fax brought instant delivery of letters. Now e-mailing, a new and hybrid form of communication, has made us think again.

Is e-mailing more like a letter or a phone call? Well, it's like both, but crucially, of course, it is written down — somewhere. It is permanent, it can be printed off, or forwarded to millions of other people. (A secretary in a London legal firm won global notoriety only a few months ago when her not entirely innocent tales of socializing with a colleague made her for a time every male e-mailer's fantasy.)

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E-mail is new, and we need to master it. We need to take care, remembering that our words may be used in evidence against us. But the killer virtues of e-mail are its speed and the access it grants you to previously inaccessible people. Why, I might even e-mail my CEO immediately after finishing this article.

The message for all of us is clear: we need to think, but also to get faster, fast.

Contributed by **FTdynamo**, the business and management portal.

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Definition for: instant messaging

(IM). A live chat and email service that enables you to find your friends when they are online and send messages or talk via a private chat room. Each user has a private list of instant messaging addresses, and the instant messaging system can be set to alert you when someone on your list is online. You can leave an email message for a user who is not available online.

Definition for: instant messaging

Examples of instant messaging systems are ICQ, Yahoo! Pager, AOL Instant Messenger, Ding!, PeopleLink, and talk.com; some of these are available for free download. Since there is no standard for instant messaging, anyone you communicate with must use the same system you use.